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THE Commonweal

Sidney Lens

BUILDING ON QUICKSAND

Latin America's social sickness

David Littlejohn

SEARCHING FOR FRANCE

the pressure of humiliation

Camus's Notebooks . *John Tracy Ellis on the Mind of the Layman* . *A Poem by Thomas Merton* . *Robert McAfee Brown From Rome* . *An Exchange on the March*

VOLUME LXXIX, NO. 6 NOVEMBER 1, 1963 TWENTY-FIVE CENTS

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The Commonweal Idea

As a lay-edited magazine The Commonweal has no "official" status within the Church. It cannot speak for the Church nor can it pretend to claim that its editorial views represent even an unofficial consensus. It is a "Catholic publication" only in the sense that its editors are Catholic laymen whose judgments are informed by their dedication to their religious convictions.

Yet in the thirty-eight years since its founding, the editors of The Commonweal have never looked upon its unofficial status as a handicap. On the contrary it has served to emphasize a vital requirement of Catholic life: that in his day-to-day life the Christian is called upon to apply, as a fallible man, his religious principles to the flux and flow of human events. . . .

American Catholics are now willing to take a close look at their own performance, to measure their ideals against the reality of their actions. At the same time, a new awareness of the importance of the laity in the Church has burst upon the scene with astonishing force. Taken together these changes have meant a period of intense ferment, of bold thought and an honest examination of conscience. . . .

It is this drive for confrontation which has earned for The Commonweal the reputation of being a "liberal" weekly. It is not a description we would disavow. On the contrary, as nothing else ever could, the great wisdom of Popes Pius XII and John XXIII seems to us to have swept away forever the notion that the Catholic must only protect and preserve; or that the modern world is alien to the Church. No: the Catholic must be a "man for all seasons." That is what we stand for.

—from the February 15th issue

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THE COMMONWEAL
232 Madison Avenue, New York 16, N.Y.

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Second-class postage paid in Norwalk, Conn. Printed in the U.S.A. and published weekly, except biweekly from mid-July to mid-September, at 116 Main St., Norwalk, Conn., by The Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc., 232 Madison Ave., New York 16, N.Y. MUrray Hill 3-2042.

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U.S. and Canada, $8 a year. Foreign, $1 Single copies 25¢.

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THE COMMONWEAL

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, LITERATURE AND THE ARTS

Racial Diplomacy

IF IT IS true to say that every political issue has some degree of moral significance, it is also obvious that some have more than others. So too it is apparent that every moral issue has some degree of political significance; and some have more than others. The race issue, however, stands almost in a class by itself. It is at once the most explosive moral and the most explosive political question before the American people, a source of acute agony of conscience for the citizen and constant danger for the politician.

President Kennedy is caught squarely in the middle. He knows well enough now that the purely moral case for Negro rights is solid and impregnable. It is a case that cannot be temporized or evaded. But he also knows that, from a political point of view, there is no obvious and infallible way to guarantee the Negro the full rights which are his. The recent Louis Harris poll in *Newsweek* acutely underscores the moral ambivalence of the people and the unenviable task before the Administration. The people, by an overwhelming majority, realize that the Negro has been the victim of injustice and discrimination. So much for at least one part of their mind. But the people, also by a large majority, feel the Negro is moving too fast in his demands. They still do not want Negroes living next door to them, still retain hoary stereotypes about the Negro character, still fear inter-marriage.

The poll also confirmed a fact which is evident to Democratic and Republican politicians: President Kennedy has lost considerable popularity because of his racial stand—in the North as well as the South. He has, in brief, paid a heavy price for following the way of reason and justice. And what the President has lost, Senator Goldwater appears to have gained. Even if Mr. Kennedy ceased altogether from pressing for civil rights progress it is doubtful that he could regain his earlier popularity. Civil rights is an albatross around his neck, but one he has not tried to get rid of.

It is important to bear these realities in mind. They do much, we believe, to exonerate the President and his brother, the Attorney General, from any charge that he is "selling out" to those opposed to his civil rights program. Yet curiously enough this is precisely the charge directed at him because of the Administration's tactics in dealing with the House Judiciary Committee. That committee, under the chairmanship of Emanuel Celler, Democrat of Brooklyn, has all along been sympathetic to the Administration's desire for a strong civil rights bill.

Indeed, some of its members have wanted a stronger bill than does the President. Toward that end, a subcommittee, again under Mr. Celler's leadership, fashioned a bill which went beyond the recommendations of the Department of Justice. There was nothing wrong with that bill. But it had the almost fatal certainty of rejection by the full House, not to mention the Rules Committee whose gauntlet it would have to run in the meantime.

It was Mr. Robert Kennedy who, in an appearance before the Judiciary Committee, urged it to adopt a bill more in line with the Administration's original proposals. His appearance apparently convinced Mr. Celler to re-think his subcommittee bill. No less significantly, William M. McCulloch, the ranking Republican on the Judiciary Committee, expressed his willingness to work with the Justice Department for a compromise bill. In the end, however, the subcommittee would not budge.

It is almost impossible to see the Attorney General's action as that of one in the process of "selling out." At best, it will not be easy to get a bill through the House. To do so will require considerable Republican support. Without that support, the Administration might just as well give up the whole thing. But this hard reality means that the Administration must "compromise" with the Republican leadership —there is simply no other word which serves here.

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Compromise on the question of justice and rights is, of course, something inherently distasteful. It is thus perfectly proper to complain—with bitterness and passion—about those Republicans and Democrats who stand in the way of a bill which would guarantee the Negro full rights. But this opposition is a fact, one which will not go away. Like it or not, the Administration has to take the outright opponents and temporizers into account.

Dr. Martin Luther King has spoken recently of a "temporary setback" for the Negro cause. The reason for this setback undoubtedly lies in the growing resistance of white Northerners to the quickening pace of Negro demands. This is a distressing development; or more, a sad and sour development. But, once again, it is something that the Administration has to reckon with. In the past, we have been unhappy with the Administration for failing to acknowledge fully the moral nature of the race problem. In recent months it has rectified that failure. Its task now is essentially political—in the best sense of the word. It has to find a way to unite, for the sake of an honorable bill which can pass, the various factions in Congress. That is not a dishonorable goal.

Death of the Mirror

IN ONE way, we must confess, we were not sad to see the New York *Mirror* fold. As part of the Hearst chain, it had all the failings associated with much of the tabloid press: sensationalism as an end in itself, an over-abundance of scandal columns, an editorial position which must have made even William F. Buckley, Jr., blush at times—it had all these things and worse. But it was at least a newspaper and—our own predilections aside—one which was read by hundreds of thousands of people. Presumably, even among the weeds, they learned a little about the international world and the trials of our times. It also employed some 1500 men and women —who will find it difficult, in a diminishing newspaper market, to find similar work.

The cause of the closing of the *Mirror* is still not clear. Doubtless the recent newspaper strike was a factor—though rumors of the *Mirror's* demise were circulating before the strike. Doubtless, too, the advertising competition of the *Daily News*, which reached the same audience, was another source of pressure. No simple moral is clear. But this much is certain: our nation must find ways to stem the tide of newspaper failures. It is difficult enough now to sort out accurate news from slanted news; fewer newspapers will make this task not easier but all the harder.

Tito's Visit

THE MOST interesting thing about Marshal Tito's visit to the United States is that it caused so little stir. It was, of course, adroitly scheduled for the current heady era of good feeling, but even so, opinion throughout the nation was surprisingly mild. There were the expected pickets at the White House, requiring Tito to be air-lifted for his meeting with the President, and there was some threatened nastiness on the West Coast, which the visitor managed to avoid with the aid of a timely touch of virus. But there was nothing like the display of violent antagonism that convulsed the country in 1957, forcing cancellation of Tito's visit here. All in all, the nation took the visit in stride. Even Senator Goldwater, who has his mind on other matters these days, managed to restrain himself, and the expected orgy of narrow moralisms never materialized.

In part the mild reaction is a triumph of White House planning. Tito's appearance in Washington was stage-managed as a brief one-act production with little pomp. There were no rocking-chair pleasantries, no effusive greetings, and because the President was as nimble as the occasion required, no photographs showing him smiling at his visitor—all very important as a pre-campaign concession to lingering feeling against any association with Tito.

Tito remains a significant index to domestic political opinion. There are many less talented and more dangerous Communists in Eastern and Central Europe, but Tito has always been the great *bete noire*. His very independence of Moscow leadership has inexplicably brought him more criticism in this country. During the 1950's, as the United States pursued the obvious diplomatic policy of trying to deepen the Yugoslav-Russian split, it was not clear whether the domestic reaction it provoked was directed to the riskiness of the strategy, or to an awareness that it spelled the end to the illusory policy of liberation.

This may help to explain why Tito is an object of such extreme feeling on the part of many Americans: his policies and his success have shattered the neat division of the world into Communism and anti-Communism—two monoliths waiting petulantly for uncommitted nations to give up their untenable positions and fall in line. He may be a dictator and a dedicated Communist whose openness to both East and West is traceable to ambition and pragmatism, yet he anticipated the current splits in the Eastern and Western alliances by de-emphasizing ideology in the interests of national gain. By opting for national Communism, Tito has increased opportunities for the West. The fires of nationalism that the Communists are intent on fanning in Asia and

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Africa can be fanned within the Communist bloc too.

With its peculiar preference for stressing dangers rather than opportunities, the American right has denounced virtually all dealings with Tito. It is alert to Communist attempts to permeate free societies through trade, aid and ideas, but chooses to regard the reverse situation as pointless, even immoral. This attitude is increasingly irrelevant. Kennedy's decision to receive Tito at the White House is one more indication that the West is recognizing Communist rule in Eastern Europe and is reconciled to liberalizing, not liberating.

For Latin America

LOGICALLY and theoretically there was much to be said for linking social reform to aid from the Alliance for Progress. Unhappily the Latin American wealthy and governing classes have shown little inclination to respond and distribute idle land or surplus wealth; when destitute peasants and urban slum-dwellers become too restive, the familiar formula is for military juntas to take over. The small possessing classes appear to believe that the revolution will never come, that they may continue to enjoy their wealth and privileges indefinitely as on a tiny island in the middle of a sea of popular desperation.

Meanwhile, despite the achievements of the Alliance here and there, living conditions in this sector of our hemisphere are, if possible, even deteriorating. As Sidney Lens reports first-hand elsewhere in this issue, the situation in human terms defies description. In country after country he found unbelievable poverty and social torpor, political corruption and inequalities before the law and a tragic need of capital in the countryside. Millions subsisting completely outside the money economy literally have no money at all. On many farms the peasants try to live on one meal of starches a day. Disease and illiteracy serve to compound their helplessness and apathy.

With all its deficiencies, United States aid to Latin America must be continued on a major scale, but the need of new ways of reaching the people is all too plain. Experience indicates that the soundest approach is one that would educate those now deprived of the bare essentials for human dignity to the point that they are able to assume responsibility for their own welfare.

This is the aim of the recently formed Inter-American Cooperative Institute (1300 South Wabash Ave., Chicago 5, Ill.). Its Director, Father Harvey Steele, S.M.F., for eight years successfully demonstrated with thousands of previously impoverished and unorganized peasants in Santo Domingo how well the Antigonish techniques of self-help meet this basic Latin American problem. The ICI plans to send out trained teams to organize community projects, credit unions and cooperatives and to apply scientific agricultural methods. It hopes to start its first language and training courses in January and is seeking both clerical and lay volunteers.

ALL THINGS CONSIDERED

Report from Rome

AFTER THE first session of the Vatican Council, a story went the rounds about Xavier Rynne's *Letters from Vatican City* and two Cardinals. Said one Cardinal to the other, supposedly: "That Rynne book is a disgrace. It is full of gross untruths." "True," said the other Cardinal, "but unfortunately, your Eminence, it also contains many gross truths."

This story, almost certainly apocryphal, is apropos enough at the moment. The second session of the Council had hardly started when word circulated that Catholic bookstores in Rome had received orders for some kind of ban or restriction on the Xavier Rynne book and on *Pope, Council and World* by *Time* correspondent Robert Kaiser, as well as on several works by Fathers Hans Küng and Teilhard de Chardin. The idea behind the move, it was said, was to prevent these books from falling into the hands of unwary Bishops here for the Council—a clear case of locking the stable door far too late, for the Rynne and Kaiser books are "must reading" around here, if what I hear is correct.

News that some kind of ban was in effect produced a considerable flurry and much denial and counter-denial, accompanied, of course, by an increased demand for the books in question. Some accounts had it that the books were not to be sold at all; others said that the ban "only" applied to displaying them in a prominent way. All agreed that the order had come from the Vicariate of Rome under the inspiration of Cardinal Ottaviani's Holy Office. At this point it is impossible to say just which version of these events is true. In any case, it is clear that book-banning in one form or other has not gone out of style in some circles and that once again the conservatives have chosen the worst possible means to serve their own cause.

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As the reaction here showed, I think, those responsible for the action against the offending books badly mistake the current spirit of the Church and the Council. I did meet a few who tried to "explain" the action; no one was really willing to defend it with any enthusiasm. Most were indignant. And the reason is that the spirit of this Council is radically different from that of previous Councils.

In the past, Councils were by their very nature prone to be rather defensive in character. They were called to meet pressing dangers or to repel heresy. They tended by and large to denounce or anathematize. In contrast, the spirit of Vatican II is positive, in keeping with the new spirit at work in the Church. Years ago Romano Guardini wrote that the Church is once again coming to life in the souls of men. Only in this way can one explain the remarkable fact of Vatican II and of world reaction to it. The Council is, in Pope Paul's phrase, the Church's first step in building a bridge to the contemporary world.

There is some reaction here against reporting on the Council which inevitably and always casts the members of the Roman Curia as the bad guys. It is true enough that the Curia is a large and diverse body, made up of many people of various views, and a certain amount of oversimplification has been evident in dispatches that ignored this fact. Nonetheless, it is quite clear that major figures in the Curia are not sympathetic to the new spirit represented by the Council, and among those gathered here there is considerable feeling on this score.

The Curia is the administrative arm of the Papacy, but there sometimes seems to be a question of who is running what. Critics of the Curia complain that it is dominated by a conservative interlocking directorate, almost entirely made up of Italians, and that even the Pope has a hard time getting things done if the Curia does not approve. Too many Curia members seem as a matter of course to confuse themselves and their own preferences with the Church Universal. Theologians have been silenced and even bishops have sometimes received short shrift. The surprise is not that the Curia is resented in many quarters; the only surprise is that this resentment took so long in coming to a head.

There is little or no doubt about where Pope Paul stands on all this; his views became clear in his speech to members of the Curia a few weeks ago. Diplomat that he is, the Pope did not deliver an obvious rebuke to the Curia; on the contrary, he praised it for its many good works. His highest praise, however, involved one bland assumption: that the Curia would welcome the very changes its critics have been clamoring for. The Curia, the Pope said, suffered from "venerable old age" and needed reforms to eliminate what is "perishing and superfluous." Gently but firmly he made it plain that such reforms would be forthcoming.

The Pope clearly seems to want to share some of his responsibilities with bishops around the world—a point of crucial importance to Protestants and even more so to the Orthodox. This move would inevitably mean some decentralization and internationalization of the powers now exercised by the Curia.

What the Pope is suggesting is in no way any kind of retreat from papal infallibility, as some have suggested; rather it is a return to the concept of collegiality in the Church, and the primacy of the papacy complements rather than contradicts collegiality. All of this in turn fits in with the schema the Council Fathers started right in to discuss this time, *De Ecclesia,* which involves the most basic consideration of the nature of the Church.

This schema was originally taken up last December, at the first session. Cardinal Ottaviani was the chairman of the Commission which prepared the original draft, and it immediately came under heavy attack. It was, its critics said, entirely too representative of the narrowest kind of Curia thinking. It was extremely juridical in tone, and legalistic. The spirit was not ecumenical, and there was, as Cardinal Ritter of St. Louis noted, no mention of freedom of conscience. It was animated by a spirit of clericalism, and an unmistakable note of triumphalism antagonized many of the missionary bishops.

The debate that ensued was hot and heavy, on both sides. As far as the progressives were concerned, the draft was completely unsatisfactory, and they simply would not accept it. Eventually the schema was sent back for redrafting. It is this revised schema that the Council Fathers have been discussing at this session.

What is likely to come of it all? At this point no one can say for sure, but my own guess would go something like this: the progressives will not get everything they want, but they will get a great deal. The draft on the Church that will be approved will be far more pastoral in tone, less legalistic, less juridical. The collegiality of the bishops will be stressed, and some form of regional conferences of bishops with a real role to play will become recognized fact. There will be a strong stress on the Church as Mystery, as the Mystical Body at work in the world. Above all, there will be much less of the Counter-Reformation stress on the hierarchical structure of the Church and far more emphasis on the Church as the people of God, as the New Israel.

In short, I am optimistic—perhaps too optimistic. Rome is an exhilarating city, and there is something wonderfully exciting about seeing all these bishops gathered here, men of all colors, races and nationalities, all members of the Universal Church. All of this tends to influence one's judgment. But I arrived in Rome optimistic, convinced that great things are happening in the Church and that the tide which is running so strongly cannot be turned back. I am happy to report that nothing I have learned since I have been here—not even the abortive attempt at book-banning—has made me change this view.

JAMES O'GARA

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Instant Democracy Is Not Possible in Latin America

Building on Quicksand

SIDNEY LENS

IN 1824, when Simon Bolivar called his Amphictyonic Congress at Panama to unify Latin America, George Washington's family sent him a lock of the late President's hair and a locket with his picture. Lafayette wrote that "of all men living and even of all men in history, Bolivar is the very one to whom my paternal friend (Washington) would have preferred to send this present."

Bolivar's dream of a United States of Latin America, similar to the United States of America, unfortunately has remained unfulfilled. Its failure colors the history of the area to this day. The republics and territories south of the Rio Grande are fragmented, minuscule (except for Brazil and Mexico), incredibly poor, oligarchy-ridden, and shackled for survival to single-crop economies. The winds of progress that resulted from unity and social change in the north of the hemisphere have passed Latin America by. Alliance for Progress or no, it is hemmed in by social torpor, judicial inequality, corruption, and titanic inegalitarianism inherited from the Spanish and Portuguese past.

At the bottom of the Latin American ladder, but illustrative of its problems, is the all-Negro republic of Haiti. It is simple for theorists and diplomatic *bons vivants* to talk of "building democracy" in Haiti. But build it on what? There are no political parties in Haiti, as we know them, and there never have been. During election times "parties" do come into being, but they are merely personalistic vehicles for the men who are running, rather than continuing mass institutions. Except for a couple of years after World War II Haiti has known nothing of a trade union movement or normal labor action. The few cooperatives that exist are impotent and unstable. During most of the nation's existence—and certainly today—freedom of speech, assembly and the press, have been fictional. The four daily newspapers in Port-au-Prince claim a total circulation of 22,000, but this is doubtless high. The so-called civil service is a farce, almost everyone being appointed by the man at the top and subservient to his whim.

How does one build democracy on such quicksand? How does one educate a populace where ninety percent are illiterate, both in French and its own Creole patois? How does one mobilize pressure or public opinion where there are no unions or political parties? How does one "plan for prosperity" with an economy that produces only $330 million a year, and where per capita income is a piddling $70?

In colonial times, under French suzerainty, Haiti was the richest colony in the hemisphere. It exported and imported what was then the remarkable sum of $141 million a year. What is more, it was the first nation after the United States to make a revolution. The revolt of the slaves under Toussaint L'Ouverture, Henry Christophe and Jean-Jacques Dessalines from 1791 to 1804 has been memorialized by innumerable writers as a grand event. Unfortunately, in a mood of egalitarian nobility, the Haitians divided sugar plantations into privately owned holdings. Through the generations these holdings, passing from father to many sons, have been divided into totally unviable plots. Ninety percent of the people live off the land, and of these two out of every three own only one to five acres, and ten percent no land at all. To make matters worse the "free" farmer may possess one strip in one section and another some miles away. Here he installs a second "wife," or placee, who bears his children and tills his soil. (Almost no one bothers either with a religious or civil wedding.) If he can scrape together $100 in cash from the activities of his sundry families each year, he is not doing badly. His farming is unplanned and ridiculously primitive. He does not bother to plant or prune the coffee trees; instead he picks the bean wild. He uses no fertilizer, and neither he nor his government plans against erosion. Through the decades he has cut away so many trees for firewood that in three more generations erosion will have made his land, and that of his neighbor's, worthless. Unlettered and poor he is easy prey for everyone. A sack of coffee which is eventually sold on the world market for $45 brings the Haitian peasant only $14, of which he pays $7 to the state, leaving $7 for himself.

In all the days of the Haitian Republic there has never been an election in the rural areas where the overwhelming majority of the population lives. "Government" here is imposed by the national regime without

SIDNEY LENS, a long-time trade-unionist who writes frequently on social and economic questions for this and other magazines, has recently returned from a trip through Latin America.

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consultation or assent. The prefect, the soldier-policeman, and the new "tontons macouts," who do the bidding of "Papa Doc" Duvalier, run the peasant's life as they see fit. In the last years it is said that one peasant in every parish has been illegally killed each month by police or TTM's. Many hundreds who have bewailed their fate have just disappeared. If a member of Papa Doc's fraternity wants a choice bit of land he seizes it by the simple ruse of demanding a written title —which almost no one has. Before Papa Doc came to power there were dozens of governments—in 1956 alone there were six—and at least twenty separate constitutions. But the peasant is just where he was in 1804, illiterate, impoverished, sickly. His life expectancy is less than forty years; half his children die before the age of one. If the price of coffee on the world market goes down a penny a pound—as it has been doing with remarkable regularity since 1955—the noose tightens a little more firmly around both the nation and the peasant who bears the brunt of its tribulations.

HAITI is the sickest of the sick nations of Latin America, but its sickness is not a-typical. Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala all depend on coffee; Bolivia on tin; Venezuela on oil; Chile on copper. During and since the war most of them have encouraged industrialization—Brazil sensationally so. But they are still dependent on their raw materials for export, still tied in the Gordian knot of "balance of payments." The things they buy from the United States have gone up considerably in price; the things they sell have remained at the same levels or, as in the case of coffee, gone down dramatically. The new factories employ some proletarians and save scarce valuta that might otherwise go for various imports. But they do not solve the balance of payments problem. Almost all countries (except Mexico, which is in a separate category beyond the purview of this article) are always in dire need of international loans and foreign capital investment. Though there has been a ceaseless trend to the cities, half or more of the people live on the farms in frightful subsistence conditions. For the most part they eat one meal a day—or at best two—composed of yucca, beans, rice and other starches. If they raise a few chickens or a pig they usually do not dare eat the eggs or the meat, for this is what they need to trade for the few items they must buy in the market.

Most of the people of the area are outside the money economy: in Colombia only five million of the fifteen million use money regularly to buy commodities; in Guatemala only 700,000 out of four million. One hundred twenty million out of 200 million have never had a drink of potable water in their lives. A thousand children a day perish because of this circumstance. Usually half or more of the children die before they reach the age four. Amoebic dysentery, malaria, yaws, and innumerable other diseases are the constant companions of these unfortunate people from birth until an early death. Five percent of the farm population owns more than three-quarters of the land, while tens of millions of families are landless or have minute holdings that are totally uneconomic.

Since Fidel Castro the United States has bestirred itself to a sizeable program of aid, under the Alliance for Progress, to help remedy the situation. But there is hardly an expert in Latin America who believes that the Alliance has gotten off the ground—or that it will or can. In part this is the result of the fact that we have been pressing the very oligarchy that stifles the people to effectuate reforms that will reduce or abolish its powers. We have been pushing for a "revolution" from the "top-down," rather than from the "bottom-up." We have been asking the oligarchs to sign their own death-warrants by agreeing to land reform, tax reform, and other innovations that will depress their own status. They have replied to our proddings by ruse and fraud. For instance, at long last, after many years, Guatemala has passed a "tax reform." Income taxes have been imposed that run progressively up to forty-eight percent. The tax is already being withheld from the salaries of white-collar and other salaried workers, but businessmen and professional men won't have to pay until the end of the fiscal year, if then. The new income tax law stands in lieu of an old business-profits tax that went as high as forty-four percent. But where the old tax was simple and had relatively few loopholes, the new is riddled with holes. American experts and local lawyers agree unanimously that business has reaped a bonanza with this "tax reform," because it will be paying less this year than the years before under business-profits tax. Thus what purports to be a "reform" to redistribute income in favor of the lower and middle classes actually redistributes it in favor of the wealthy. In a land where sixty-seven percent of the people earn less than $60 a month and where there have been no wage increases for nine years, this is an intolerable burden

The problem, however, runs much deeper than this weakness of the Alliance for Progress, and requires infinitely more imagination than has been put to work so far either by United States or local experts. Consider Colombia. There are 1.8 million farm families there, most of them working five- to ten-acre plots. According to Enrique Pena Losa, head of the agricultural reform agency, the same production would be forthcoming from 800,000 families using semi-modern methods, and probably half that number with truly modern techniques. What can Colombia do with this redundancy of a million families? In the last decade it has made many thousands of jobs in the cities by developing the textile and other industries. But there is not a sufficient internal market to go much further; the nation is at a dead end in this respect. Furthermore, each week there are a thousand new families formed in the rural areas as

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young men reach the marriage age and strike out on their own. By 1975 there will be at least two million excess farm families, each eking out a miserable existence of $100 or $200 a year—if it is lucky.

What does one do with all these people? How do you make jobs for them? It costs a minimum of $2,000 in capital to produce one job in the United States, and in some industries it runs up to $60,000. The gross national product of Colombia is only $3 billion a year (the U. S. —575 billion) and savings are minuscule. Eight hundred and fifty people pay more than half of the nation's income tax—so concentrated is wealth in this mountainous country. And a large portion of the earnings are siphoned off to Switzerland or New York to anonymous safety deposit boxes.

Lauchlin Currie, one of Franklin Roosevelt's administrative assistants and now a citizen of Colombia, has formulated an emergency plan, called Operation Colombia, for creating 500,000 jobs in the cities. He believes that by initiating a massive home-building program with local materials, and using the machinery in the various factories for three shifts a day instead of one, Colombia can make a grand transition to modernity. He feels this can be done without a rise of foreign capital. Currie's plan has considerable support in intellectual circles, but it stands little chance of being implemented. And even he admits that it is only a crash two-year program. After that, he concedes, there will be other "emergencies."

In Costa Rica the population growth is 4.9 percent a year—highest in the world. Throughout Latin America the figure is 3.2 percent. So explosive is the rise in population that in the last few years the countries of this area have barely increased production to keep up with it. Not a few of the nations have witnessed an absolute decline in their standard of living, and almost all are suffering from the circular disease of balance of payment deficits, borrowings, inflation, price boosts, and demand for higher wages. In the villages the impact of this vicious circle must be taken philosophically because unless the peasant is willing to foment revolution he can only accept his victimization in unhappy hopelessness.

The result of the economic turmoil is reflected in a political malaise—and in violence. Much of this is stirred and encouraged by Communists and Fidelistas (who frequently are independent, and at loggerheads with the official Kremlin-followers), but the soil is there to plow—and it is being plowed. Minor but continual guerrilla skirmishes take place in many more countries than America realizes—300 guerrillas in Nicaragua, 70 in Guatemala, 900 in Venezuela, thousands (mostly bandits) in Colombia. "Invasion" by peasants of the large holdings of absentee landlords is a frequent occurrence, initiated often by fairly moderate elements. FANAL, a Christian-Democratic union of peasants in Colombia, boasts of "seizing" thousands of hectares of land for its members. In Peru dozens of haciendas are being overrun under the new President, while the administration winks at it.

Latin America is a seething cauldron. Like many volcanoes it may seem inactive at the moment (particularly since most American reporters approach it with the myopia of the Embassy theoreticians from whom they glean their reports), but the lava can pour forth at any moment. It boils evermore furiously underneath—far removed from the naked eye.

Searching for France

DAVID LITTLEJOHN

THE POPULAR American image of a foreign country (like the popular foreign image of America) is a compound of journalism, historical myth, scraps of statistics, tourist memories, and self-indulged fantasies of some 'local color' probably long since reduced to a common international gray, if it ever existed in the first place. Occasionally, some shadow of the truth, the actual contemporary 'fact' of the country may hover in the background of this dream-picture; but it is more likely to be several generations out of date, and many myths away from reality. As it becomes more apparent that such distorted tourist-poster pictures, romanticized either positively or negatively (the quaint charm of Olde England, the 'Prussianness' of the Germans), are a major block to any kind of international community, the obligation to replace them with something closer to the truth becomes more serious.

No country, perhaps, lives more vividly and incorrectly in the popular American imagination than France. The first, and apparently ineradicable image, is that of *La Belle France*, the land of elegance and sin: perfumes, wine, *haute couture*, fine cuisine, the land of Lautrec and Bardot. As one tries to organize this picture into

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a serious, less-impressionistic view of contemporary French society, something perhaps closer to the facts, the persistent myths keep getting in the way. We know, for example, that France is "Catholic"—but how much, how importantly, in what way? Economically, the picture is even more confused: one simply does not think of France as an "economy," as one automatically regards Germany, Japan, even England. The popular picture of the French economy is still that of an agricultural society. There is simply no place in the image of France for the typical "working class," unless it is rioting in the streets.

Street-riots, in their way, and parliamentary crises, are perhaps as much a part of the American's picture of France as champagne or the *opéra*. Politically, our image of France is one of a hopeless, childish, and most un-Anglo-Saxon chaos. This, after all, is the country that entertained such a parade of premiers between the dismissal and recall of De Gaulle, the country whose political life is splintered between such an array of squabbling parties, the country forever exploded by the *manifestations* of one frustrated group or another. There was a certain romance, an almost fictional sense of triumph in the Return of De Gaulle in 1958, and for a while this man was able to capture completely the American imagination. He did, after all, end that senseless and bloody war in Algeria that had tumbled so many cabinets and alienated so many allies—that compound of race-hatred, anarchy, torture, and fascism that perhaps, more than anything else, convinced Americans that this charming but foolish country had no place in the serious international policy-making of more stable Western powers.

But the romance has long since ended. Since his return, and in recent months more vehemently, it would seem that De Gaulle has intentionally and perversely acted so as to enfix this image of France in the popular (and official) American mind. To the obstinacy of the Algerian nationalists at Evian, he has matched his own obstinacy at the UN, in the Common Market, in NATO. He demands, like a sullen child, his own bombs; refuses to let Britain play in his Common Market; pettishly withdraws his ships from the Atlantic alliance. We may admire his idealist's disdain for French domestic politics (such as they are), his direct appeals to his people over the cracked heads of toy-soldier *parlementaires;* but surely he oversteps his grounds in trying such tactics in the Parliaments of Man, the Federations of the World. There are important things to be done, and history is not to be diverted by the delusions of *grandeur* of any such petty princeling.

SUCH, briefly and crudely, may be the popular image of France. How much it contains of truth, of half (or third, or quarter) truth, of total falsehood would be well worth determining. An admirable means of testing the image has recently been presented us in the form of a symposium of experts, both French and American, entitled *In Search of France* (Harvard University Press, $8.95). It is the assertion of each of the six searchers—two political scientists, one French, one French-American, two American sociologists, and the Secretary-General of the French Senate (who conveniently reviews the other five in a summary chapter)—that the changes in the situation and attitudes of France in the last ten or twenty years have been so extraordinary and so marked as to constitute a veritable socio-economic (if not political) revolution. "There is no doubt," writes one of their number, "that France has changed, and changed dramatically, in the last ten years." "The transformation of the old balance of French society, begun in the war years, has been drastic." This assertion, for the contributors, is simply a restatement of the obvious. But it was evidently unsuspected by those who retain anything of the "traditional" picture of France, and may come to them as something of a surprise.

ONE of the authors' most valuable attempts, an exercise in international sympathy that would be well worth imitating, is that of placing the pictures of both the Traditional and the New France in the context of the national tragedy that has been her lot for the past three decades. We may well have forgotten what depression, defeat, occupation, national division, and the postwar humiliation of dependence and decolonization must have meant to France and to Frenchmen, and presume an unbroken continuity between the expatriates' France of the 20's and the tourist's France of today. For the French (and French-American) contributors to *In Search of France,* so personally aware of what was for their country the national equivalent of a decades-long dragged-out, near-total nervous breakdown, such an omission would be impossible.

It is remarkable, in fact, to what degree each of the authors explains French institutions, attitudes, and developments in psychological terms, as the result of the frustrations of the 30's, the humiliation of the 40's, the despair of the 50's. It is perhaps no accident that the two most eloquent and convincing essays in this

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volume, those of the political scientists Jean-Baptiste Duroselle and Stanley Hoffmann, stress most particularly the national tragedy. Over and over in their chapters one encounters the word "humiliation," their explanation for so many of the puzzles in French national behavior for the past twenty years. "It would not be wrong," writes Stanley Hoffmann, "to describe French policy in the last two decades as a battle against humiliation."

THE TRAGEDY begins, for both Hoffmann and Duroselle, with the delayed but drastic shock of the depression in the 1930's, following the long sleep of the Third Republic and coming at a time when other countries were already well on the way to recovery and exciting, even revolutionary social renewal. But it took the War, with its concomitant defeat, occupation, and (Duroselle especially notes) humiliatingly small share in the ultimate allied victory to bring about the disastrous psychological collapse that lies behind so much of French history since.

Duroselle describes with sincerity and conviction the progressive stages of national humiliation, evoking with realistic force the sense of what it *feels* like to be crushed: to see one's invincible army running in defeat in a matter of weeks, one's traditional liberties truncated, one's Motherland overrun by a despised and alien power. The continued occupation ruined France economically; but more important, the writers stress, was the intolerable psychological effect. If the War left France less desolated than Poland or Greece or Russia, it left lasting scars nonetheless—not least the bitter split between Vichy and Resistance France, which continued to rankle for years after Liberation.

Distrusted, even scorned by Roosevelt's great America, she was accorded almost no share in the spoils of victory, to De Gaulle's everlasting indignation. At the end of the war, ruined, exhausted, shamed, deprived of her place in the company of great nations, France's humiliation was still not complete. She was forced to beg American aid, and to accept as its price the unification and rearmament of her enemy. Her attempted alliances failed. The process of national recovery, American aid or no, was slow and painful. She lost Syria, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia, saw her shreds of empire falling away: She endured the last humiliation of Suez. "Finally, France discovered that there are only two great powers and that she is not one of them, that decolonization is an irresistible movement which she vainly tried to stop." (Duroselle.)

Building on this foundation of national tragedy, Stanley Hoffmann is able to explain with sympathy and persuasiveness many of the annoying and apparently irrational elements of French foreign policy in recent years: the desperate, near-hysterical fight not to lose Algeria; De Gaulle's insistence on nuclear and diplomatic independence; his thirst for "rank," for *gloire*, for France's new *grandeur* (which does not, of course, mean what it means in English) as the leader of a European community that would become the third of the world's great powers, forgetting always China. Although some of this is to be explained in terms of individual psychology—the Algerian *colons'*, the embittered army's, De Gaulle's—it is more the product of a *nation's* psychology, a nation determined, in Duroselle's words, to escape any further humiliation.

"Precisely because the process of adaptation has been a cruel one," Professor Hoffmann pleads, "the wounds will heal most effectively if France is able to cling to all available symbols or shreds of worldwide interest." "It would be well for the General's successors," concludes Duroselle, "not to lose sight of the fact that a nation needs a certain pride . . . What motivates Frenchmen today is no longer a nationalism of expansion and domination, but merely a desire to have a proper place in the world."

I CANNOT begin to summarize the great complex of social, economic, and to some degree political changes, changes in attitude (and perhaps even values) as well as material changes, which the "Six Authors in Search of a National Character" to borrow the title of François Goguel's review-chapter) put forward as the basis for their "New France," and to which the greater portion of the book is dedicated. Let it only be stated that virtually every change that is discussed chips off another piece from the traditional image of France.

The spectacular recovery of French industry has been perhaps the most important cure for the devastating 'National Inferiority Complex' produced by the war and its effects: France is now the co-ruler with industrial West Germany in the booming Common Market, and in fact leads the European community, even the world, in a number of areas. Social changes, too, are legion. Externally, they represent nothing peculiarly 'French,' but rather a coming-of-age to the mid-twentieth century, an adaptation *à l'Américaine* delayed in France's case by the "Stalemate Society" of the Third Republic, and then hastened by the cataclysmic effect of war—the active originating force, in effect, of almost all the transformations of modern France.

More striking even than the statistics, the material changes, are the changes in French attitudes. The New Frenchman's acceptance of the state as a semi-paternal ally, as something other than a pack of inimical and idiotic bureaucrats and politicians to be cheated and evaded by whatever means possible, seems to astonish every contributor, brought up to expect the more traditionally "French" response. Laurence Wylie describes most dramatically how the sick, actionless nostalgia for "better days" that characterized his villagers in the Vaucluse just ten years ago (for a France,

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in fact, remarkably like our own romantic image) has been transformed, on an individual level, into concretely productive and future-directed energy.

More and more, as a new respect for 'realism' dawns, Frenchmen seem to be breaking out of the hard-shell individualism of suspicion and distrust, and agreeing to work together for something like a "common good." A most 'un-French' sense of national co-operation is seen to emerge in these chapters, as the harsh warfare of group against group, region against region, Church against anti-clerical begins to soften. No single aspect of social change is more constantly and unanimously stressed by these six searchers for France than the marked postwar rise of powerful and active new professional associations, intermediaries between the people and the state, each committed to national progress and economic reform as well as its own particular interests. More than one of the authors, in fact, express the faint hope that these broad-minded new *'groupes de pression'* may one day bring about the long-overdue political revival of France, by gradually transmuting into genuine and effective new political parties, to replace the log-jam of partisan deadwood that was France's unfortunate legacy from the Third Republic.

IT IS, to an American Catholic, especially notable to what degree these authors credit the rôle of the French Church—or at least French Catholic laymen—in founding and fostering these progressive, reform-oriented professional groups. Jesse Pitts, in fact, gives to the entire new associational movement for reform the name, somewhat loosely, of "neo-Catholicism."

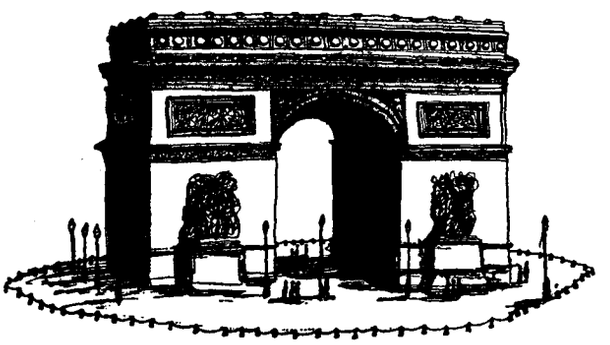
The emphasis in all these growing movements has been on lay initiative, underwrought with a new sense of Catholic pride and solidarity in a country long dominated by anti-clericism. It is not a "religious revival" in the traditional sense; the hope of the clergy for a "re-Christianization" of France cannot, as Pitts notes, be regarded as fulfilled. Indeed, there is a degree of understandable hesitancy on the part of the hierarchy at the growing independence of these influential groups. The "traditional" French Church, the Church of pilgrimages and fast-days, is on the decline, and could scarcely be recognized in the "neo-Catholicism" that so impresses these social scientists of a changing France. Rather, these new movements represent, in the spirit of Vatican II (Act I), an effort at self-redefinition and revitalization by the Church in France. "It demands," writes Pitts (the 'New' Catholicism), "an application of Christian principles to all phases of life."

In this sense, the half-image of the French Church as our intellectual and social avant-garde is just (and so, in its way, is the obverse image of the wane of traditional, ritual religiosity). Catholicism in France can scarcely be given up as moribund and anachronistic, when it has played such a part in bringing French society and economy to terms with the twentieth century. Having been so long associated with the established order, the conservative *haute bourgeoisie,* she has, increasingly since the 1930's (at least in her members) chosen to identify herself—it may well have been a matter of survival—with the forces of economic and social reform. In this aspect, at least, the Old World can claim a considerable advance on the New.

There are still blocks, major blocks, to France's complete adaptation, her acculturation into the increasingly International-Style society of the mid-twentieth century world. The most serious hindrances to full adaptation—on this the participants are unanimous—are her educational and political systems, neither of which has made any tangible attempt to align itself with the realities of change. Until both these institutions are brought to undergo drastic reform, it is the conclusion of the six authors that France's long-sought return to power and place must perforce be delayed.

With these exceptions, however, one may safely conclude that France has joined the twentieth century. But by the American reader still obsessed by the dissolving traditional image, the question may yet be asked whether it was worth it. Laurence Wylie writes: "For these Francophiles the recent changes in French society are alarming. They see the same forces impinging on France as elsewhere in the world, because the forces for change which we have observed are not peculiar to France. . . . Everywhere rural communities are being urbanized, social barriers are being lowered, cultures are being integrated into larger entities. Everywhere the state is intervening more in the lives of individuals and of smaller groups within the state. The Francophiles assume that 'their' France is rapidly losing its characteristic qualities." "Today visitors seeking escape into tradition may return from France disappointed," warns Professor Wylie, and goes on to raise what must be for every ancient nation the awesome and ultimate question: "Has France become 'Americanized,' as the French have long feared that it might be?"

There may, it turns out, be no choice. In the economic and political spheres, at least, adaptation to an 'International Style' (which often looks "American" only because it was American first, or most noticeably) may simply be a matter of international survival. In the



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social sphere, it may be an irresistible transformation that no nationalistic nostalgia can turn back or delay. One cannot legislate back a lost Arcadian charm, or re-establish local color by decree of state.

There *is*, nonetheless, something 'essentially French,' something likely to survive, and valuable enough to maintain, if only because a nation's history, geography, language, and artistic heritage are not to be shaken off by any passing wave of *américanization*. Specifically what this something is is harder to say, and formulations that reduce it to art, cuisine, and *savoir vivre* (like Professor Wylie's, like the popular image) seem to err by specification, as those (like Duroselle's) that speak only of "French culture" seem to err on the side of vagueness. There is a wisdom, perhaps, in De Gaulle's leaving the definition—and the problem behind it—for the people of France to solve: " . . . the age in which we are living —marked as it is by the acceleration of scientific and technological progress, the need for social betterment, the emergence of a host of new states, the ideological rivalry between empires—demands a vast regeneration both within ourselves and in our relations with others. The problem is to accomplish this without France ceasing to be France."

A PROTESTANT VIEWPOINT

What the Pope Said

ROBERT McAFEE BROWN

ONE OF THE traffic signs in Geneva near the World Council of Churches, which I visited before arriving in Rome for the Vatican Council, has the admonition to motorists: "Silence, Prudence." If one gave a free translation to this (something like "Don't make any noise, and be careful what you do"), it might serve as an appropriate admonition to the non-Catholic observers at Vatican II.

For it must be clear that an observer is here to be an "observer," rather than to be a journalist. It would be easy to abuse the privilege of observer by commenting, in too free-wheeling a fashion, on what is going on, particularly if one were to offer premature assessments of the speeches, tendencies, and differences of opinion that emerge as a Council begins to take shape. At the same time, it can be pointed out that the press is being given access to much fuller information about the debates, and the contents of the *schemata*, than was true last year, and that the Council fathers, while taking a pledge of secrecy in relation to meetings of the various commissions, are admonished only to observe prudence and discretion in commenting outside the *aula* on the actual conciliar sessions themselves. Thus the events of each morning are the common possession of all interested persons early each afternoon. This somewhat eases the burden the observer feels resting upon him whenever he opens his mouth or sits at his typewriter. He is perhaps no longer called to the Genevan admonition of "Silence," but he must remain faithful to the admonition of "Prudence."

So much by way of general introduction to whatever columns I shall write between now and the recess of the Council in early December: I will not consider it proper to comment on debates in progress, or to distinguish the "good guys" and the "bad guys." But, unless otherwise instructed, I shall consider it within the bounds of "Prudence" to offer occasional Protestant reactions to the course of events of Vatican II.

Certainly this can be done with no impropriety in relation to the Pope's opening allocution, since the text has received wide publicity. To a Protestant, the allocution is even more important than might initially appear, for in it the Pope made clear that he was not just opening the Council, but that he was using the occasion of the opening of the Council to set forth what are to be the main emphases of his entire pontificate. Indeed, he suggested that if there had not been the occasion of the Council's opening, his remarks would probably have been cast in the form of an encyclical.

IT SEEMED to me, both in hearing the allocution (with the help of a translation provided by the Secretariat for Christian Unity) and in thinking about it during the opening days of the Council, that to the degree that it comes to represent the mind of the Roman Catholic Church, it gives cause for hope in the ecumenical dialogue in each of its four main points. I am sure that as the Council proceeds, there will be speeches that will cause me moments of pessimism and gloom, but such emotions have no place in reflecting upon the papal speech itself. Each of the main points opens windows that Pope John had begun to open, and opens them yet further.

1. Pope Paul reminded the fathers that their first business in hand was to proceed to a clearer understanding

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of the meaning of the church (as they have since begun to do in their debates on *De Ecclesia*). A great many Protestant concerns about Roman Catholicism center around what we have felt to be the one-sidedness of the treatment of the church at Vatican I, in which the church is understood almost exclusively in terms of papacy. But at Vatican II, those one-sided implications are, hopefully, to be corrected, at least in terms of the relationship between the Bishop of Rome and the other Bishops. The Council which Pope John originally convoked, and in conformity with whose intentions Pope Paul has clearly allied himself, is to banish "the fear wrongly deduced from that Council [Vatican], as if the supreme power conferred by Christ on the Roman Pontiff to govern and vivify the church were sufficient, without the assistance of the Ecumenical Councils." It is clear, in other words, that the Pope desires the present Council to clarify the way in which the teaching authority of the church is shared among all the bishops, and not concentrated so exclusively in the Bishop of Rome that ecumenical councils are an unnecessary luxury.

To whatever degree the Council acts in this direction, then, there will be a clarification of the doctrine of the church at the point of the role that the bishops occupy within it. This is helpful ecumenically, not because it does away with certain theological difficulties Protestants will continue to have about *any* definition of infallible teaching authority, but because it clarifies an area that has been much misunderstood. In a dialogue, clarification of issues is basic, and must precede any spelling out of the differences and similarities of point of view that then remain for the two participants. And in this instance, while (as must constantly be reiterated) the clarification will not remove theological problems, it will at least put the discussion on a clearer plane, and also, I feel, move it in a direction that is relatively more, rather than less, congenial to a Protestant understanding of the church.

2. The Pope's plea for renewal and reform strikes an immediately responsive note, of course, in any Protestant breast. While the allocution made perfectly clear that from a Catholic standpoint such a plea did not involve an admission that the Catholic Church had been basically unfaithful "to her divine Founder," it did make clear that renewal there must be, if the church is to present herself to the world as a vehicle through which the world can see Christ. Indeed, as the leader of our observers' worship service the next morning remarked, the Christocentric emphasis here and throughout the allocution was particularly impressive. When we hear the Pope say, as he did in his allocution, "May the living church be conformed to the living Christ," we realize that in principle all has been said that needs to be said about the way by which the church—Catholic, Protestant or Orthodox—is to become a more faithful transmitter of her heritage. We Protestants have often claimed a kind of corner on the notion of reform, as though the idea were somehow inadmissible within a Roman Catholic framework, and it is most heartening to the ecumenical dialogue that the principle of reform is not only implied by the calling of a Council, or stated with such remarkable vigor by a Hans Küng, but expressly insisted upon by the Holy Father himself.

3. The third area of the allocution was the area of most immediate interest to the observers present, for here Pope Paul was dealing with the unity of the church. Until fairly recently, many Catholics have represented the idea of the reunion of Christendom as though it meant that the sinful Protestants would return to the sinless Mother Church, who was waiting patiently for them, but not reaching out toward them. A good many recent Catholic theologians have given the lie to this point of view, and Pope John certainly emphasized the need for reciprocal repentance as a basis for working toward reunion. But I do not recall any single statement by any Catholic that puts the matter as directly and forthrightly as did Pope Paul, nor any statement previously that occupies such a formally important place as the statement he made to those of us sitting so close to him in St. Peter's on September 29. The key paragraph, dealing with the separation of Catholics and non-Catholics cannot be heard too many times by Protestants—or Catholics: "If we are in any way to blame for that separation, we humbly beg God's forgiveness and ask pardon too of our brethren who feel themselves to have been injured by us. For our part, we willingly forgive the injuries which the Catholic Church has suffered, and forget the grief endured during the long series of dissensions and separations."

I PREDICT that this statement will become a kind of charter to characterize the atmosphere that must inform future ecumenical discussion, not only because of its source, but because it is so forthright in stating the two

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essential ingredients that must be present in any genuine reconciliation: (a) a plea for forgiveness for wrongs that one has inflicted, and (b) a granting of forgiveness for wrongs that one has suffered. I would hope that in comparable situations on the Protestant side, our own leaders can make statements that are as generous and gracious. As long as this attitude prevails, there are no barriers too strong to exclude the visitation of the Holy Spirit in our ecumenical endeavors.

THE POPE's treatment of Christian unity, however, did not run any danger of evaporating into sentimentality. It was kept firmly in the context of reality by his recognition of the grievous problems that still remain, and by the acknowledgment, which it seems to me must always inform discussions of Christian unity, that although with men it seems impossible, with God all things are possible.

4. The final theme of the allocution, the concern of the church for the modern world, is ecumenically significant not only because it is morally right, but because it also opens certain doors for joint activity. Protestants as well as Catholics are concerned about the poor, about culture, about the leaders of the nations, about adherents of other religions. And while doctrinal unity is denied us at present, civic solidarity and mutual concern for the world are not. There are many areas in which even now we can make common cause one with another. Had the Pope been speaking to a predominantly American audience, he would surely have cited the race issue as one of the burning concerns of "the church and the modern world," and this is an area (as I pointed out in an earlier column) where, despite our differences on infallibility, for example, we are united in our joint convictions about the rights of the dispossessed, the evils of segregation and so on.

To the degree, then, that the Catholic Church wishes, in the Pope's magnificent words, to approach the world "with the sincere intention not of conquering it, but of serving it; not of despising it, but of appreciating it; not of condemning it, but of strengthening it and saving it," she will find that there are many points where Protestants can be comrades in arms rather than separated ecclesiasts. One can even entertain the hope, perhaps too utopian, that disgruntled Protestants will begin citing the above words to describe the Catholic attitude to the world, rather than always resorting to the *Syllabus of Errors*.

As we left St. Peter's, a crowd was gathered in the large square to receive the papal blessing. The Pope finally appeared in his Vatican window, many floors above the street level. I could not help feeling how very small he looked, so high and so far away. And then it occurred to me that this smallness was not a bad symbol for the man who had just told us that he was "the least among you," that in him "there is no intention of human predominance, no jealousy of exclusive power," and who had only a few minutes before compared himself to the figure of Honorius III in the Basilica of St. Paul's, "a humble worshipper, tiny and prostrate, kissing the feet of a Christ of gigantic dimensions."

A Baroque Gravure

(from a 17th century book of piety)

She is devout and plump, but not happy:
Hers is a *vie infortunée*
But she will be patient
She will bear life at Versailles.

No, she is not a Barbary slave:
But she, too. has her destiny, and the friendly
engraver
Suggests a comparison: blackamoors
In chains. They are beaten.
A placid overseer
Raises his stick. One slave
Meek in coat and chain.
Waits.
(Are you, Madame,
Sometime or other stung by wicked tongues?)

She, under the palm tree,
Great unfortunate peahen,
Sees none of this,
(Though three blacks in the next field
Are hooked to a plow).
No, she contemplates her own case,
And musters up
Her own resolutions.
(Plusieurs ont vu leurs peines terminées
Par leur patience et leur vertu.)

A resolution:
"Let each carry his own cross!"

Two shiploads, there, arrive from Barbary.
(Is there patience under hatches?
Is there merit? Will virtue terminate
Their misfortunes?)
She does not inquire.
She is carrying her own
Cross.

One independent Moor
Wearing an arbitrary uniform
Holds a bow and arrow
And (as if it had a meaning)
Views her sorrow.

THOMAS MERTON

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THE SCREEN

Steppe By Steppe

THE TIME has come, or perhaps it's already past, for Hollywood to look to its laurels. Not only are the outstanding imported films like "8½," "Winter Light," and "Tom Jones" grabbing all the attention, but now also some of the not-so-greats are winning applause and customers. If Hollywood is interested only in box office, it probably still holds first place. But sometimes even paying audiences follow the critics' huzzahs, and if American movie makers don't look out, these audiences will prefer the lesser imports to routine American efforts. Some of the recently imported not-so-greats are certainly worth consideration.

Although it is an Italian-French co-production, "The Steppe" is actually another of those international films. Its stunning outdoor scenes were photographed in Yugoslavia; its script is based on a short story by Anton Chekhov; its Russian characters are portrayed by a fine Continental cast under the excellent direction of Alberto Lattuada; and the Italian language of the sound track is translated by good English subtitles. Seemingly plotless, "The Steppe" is one of those unusual films about life itself.

The story simply tells about a little boy who is on his way to school in a distant town and is making his first long journey away from home. The boy is somewhat moist-eyed and uneasy after leaving his mother, who plied him with instructions and cautions; but he grows in confidence as he sits beside the carriage driver, taking in the alternately bleak and colorful views on the steppe, and listening to his uncle, who is not as brusque as he seems, and to Father Christopher, who is the essence of kindliness and good sense. The tone of the journey changes when the boy is put in the care of rough, boisterous drivers of a wagon train, but by that time, the kid is ready to take everything in stride.

With its ever-changing scenery, "The Steppe" is crowded with characters and becomes a kaleidoscope of events and people all seen through the awe-filled eyes of a youngster, beautifully played by Daniel Spallone, who grows bolder and wiser during the long trip. Later he will look back on the incidents, scenes and people of this journey as the first step in his expanding education. He will always remember Father Christopher (nicely played by Charles Vanel) and his many words of wisdom, like "ignorance is the only darkness." You will enjoy the journey too, with its lovely shots of blowing wheat, grazing sheep, and that magnificent panorama with an enormous field of sunflowers stretching across the wide screen.

Another extraordinarily beautiful movie is the Japanese "Chushingura" with its gorgeous color photography of eighteenth-century costumes and sets and handsomely-robed samurai in the snow. Stemming from an old Kabuki drama, the story tells of an incorruptible lord who draws his sword on a sneering, less-honest lord and is then unjustly ordered to commit hara-kiri. The dead man's samurai then plot revenge that requires years to put into execution, but they finally kill off the villainous lord. The cast that includes Koshiro Matsumoto as the leading samurai, Toshiro Mifune as a hired warrior, and Yuzo Kayama as the high-principled lord, is excellent, but the plot is so complicated and the film's pace is so slow in spite of all the swordplay that one is likely to become impatient long before the story has run its endless-epic course. Director Hiroshi Inagaki, however, uses the color photography so well that audiences who don't insist on speed and action should get great pleasure out of scene after scene that have the charm and elegance of the best Japanese prints.

CONTINUING our travels abroad and advancing to present-day India, we come to "The Householder," a film that is as delightful as it is engrossing. Since we have seen few Indian films other than those fine-but-often-grim Satyajit Ray gems, we are suprised to find "The Householder" is a comedy with a warm and appealing story. Perhaps this is due to its being an Indian-American co-production, or perhaps it's due to the novel from which it stems, the work of Ruth Prawer Jhabvala who also wrote the film's script.

In any case, "The Householder" is a joy as it tells through flashbacks a story of a young couple's first year of marriage. The husband (Shashi Kapoor) is a little apprehensive about what he's let himself in for: he hardly knows his bride; he isn't sure he likes her; and he makes the dreadful mistake of comparing her housekeeping to his mother's. The wife (lovely Leela Naidu), bored and restless at home alone, remembers her happier girlhood. The husband teaches at a private Delhi college and is having financial difficulties since his headmaster is an idealistic type whose motto is "Work Is Worship," and whose wife is mean and selfish about money. But the young couple's troubles grow worse: the boy's petulant mother arrives and proves herself a general nuisance by nagging at the wife and babying her boy.

Producer Ismail Merchant has given this engrossing picture a good cast throughout and some nice black-and-white photography of Delhi and environs. And director James Ivory has handled his people and amusing-realistic story well. The picture moves slowly at times, but the young couple is so engaging and their story is so universal that "The Householder," in spite of India's many unfamiliar mores, could be happening anywhere. Furthermore, this foreign film has one more

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welcome asset. It was shot simultaneously in two language versions: Hindi and English, so the latter version shown here didn't have to be afflicted with subtitles or dubbing into English. PHILIP T. HARTUNG

CORRESPONDENCE

"Marching for Justice"

Washington, D. C.

TO THE EDITORS: I marched in the August 28th March on Washington, and in the same group as Professor Francis Kearns. This and my "checkered career," to which Dr. Kearns refers ("Marching for Justice," September 20), entitles me to register dissent.

Why the grudging remarks about Georgetown? Georgetown *did* participate and more conspicuously, in my judgment, than any other university or college. The president of the university *did* authorize that participation. The administration *did* rent and set up 400 beds for out-of-town marchers. It *did* supply each marcher with a free lunch. This, it seems to me, deserves generously positive recognition.

Dr. Kearns does acknowledge these facts, but in two brief and dry sentences. This not notably magnanimous acknowledgment is offset by snide, petulant, and snobbish asides. Particularly deplorable is his reference to the "low-paid Negro menials from the university housekeeping staff." The Negroes in question are not menials, are not treated as menials, are not regarded as menials, do not regard themselves as menials, and, I think, would be deeply hurt to know that they had been described as menials.

Nor do I understand what point Dr. Kearns is making by his sarcasm about the "wealthy white students who would soon don their 'jobs and freedom' buttons and take part in the march." I do not know whether they were wealthy or poor—I suspect that Dr. Kearns doesn't either—but I do know that they marched. That calls for a cheer, not a sneer.

In an earlier article in *The Commonweal*, with which I was in substantial agreement, Dr. Kearns, badly informed, unjustly criticized Father John Devine. He might have made amends in this later article by pointing out that the generous participation by Georgetown in the August 28th March was largely due to the efforts of the same Father Devine.

The general tone of Dr. Kearns' article hardly reflects the spirit of quiet enthusiasm, high resolve, brotherly love which was the mood of the march and of the marchers. It was a day to be remembered, as of ringing bells, sounding trumpets, waving banners. Dr. Kearns has managed to inject an oddly sour note.

(Rev.) GEORGE H. DUNNE, S.J.

The Author Replies

Washington, D. C.

TO THE EDITORS: I find Father Dunne's letter somewhat puzzling, since the article he attacks was about the broad significance and results of the Washington freedom rally and referred only incidentally to Georgetown's participation, terming the university's response "generous."

The university may very well regard its Negro employees with paternal fondness, but their status is that of "menials" because they are paid deplorably low salaries, because they are almost all employed at menial jobs (as janitors, handymen, and waitresses), and because amazingly few Negroes are employed by the university in clerical positions.

Far from regarding Georgetown's student marchers with sarcasm, I applauded them for their "enthusiastic sense of involvement" and for their willingness to step forth from the miasma of apathy which permeates their campus.

In my former article on the Georgetown sit-in there is not a single word about Father Devine which is factually inaccurate, "badly informed," or unjustly critical. Father Devine's record on the race issue is, aside from the assigned role he carried out in the sit-in affair, an excellent one. Had my recent *Commonweal* article been mainly about Georgetown's participation in the freedom march and not about the larger significance of the march itself, I would, indeed, have acknowledged Father Devine's important role in bringing about administrative endorsement of the march.

The chief charge Father Dunne brings against me is that I did not engage in lavish and unrestrained praise (with bells, trumpets, and banners) of the university's participation in the march. I plead guilty.

It seems to me that few religious institutions were entitled to such praise. Can we honestly say that the churches have exercised leadership in the struggle for racial justice? Did the churches really risk much in supporting this legally acceptable and internationally acclaimed rally? For Father Dunne and some few other heroic individuals who have devoted their lives to prodding Catholics into a Christian stand on the race issue, the march was a high point of achievement. For the rest of us it was a beginning—a time, as was pointed out by various religious spokesmen at the rally, for the frank admission of past culpable indifference and for dedication to the future.

In commenting on wealthy Georgetown students ("wealthy" because only a small percentage of American families could afford the school's $2,200 a year charge for tuition, room and board) and on the fact that I and some fellow white marchers live in segregated housing facilities, I was reflecting on our complicity in

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the whole network of class privilege and private compromise which underlies the race problem. It was this idea that A. Philip Randolph, the originator of the march, had in mind when he connected the struggle of the Negro with the struggle for Medicare, higher minimum wages, social security, and Federal aid to education.

Our concern now ought to be not the composition of congratulatory notes but some sober thought on how the spirit of the rally can be turned into action. After all, 200,000 marchers gathered at the Lincoln Memorial not to improve the public image of Georgetown and the Catholic Church but to promote racial justice.

I believe the spirit of the rally can be converted into action only if we are willing to be truthful with ourselves. If any Catholic school played a "more conspicuous" role it was probably Woodstock College, where the Jesuit seminarians volunteered almost unanimously and the difficult task was to choose the fifty who would travel in the single bus that the school could afford on its meager resources. But who is to say which group of marchers was "conspicuous"—the 400 from Catholic University, the 250 from Georgetown, or the fifty from Woodstock? What difference does it make whether the participation of any one institution was "conspicuous"? Were we there to march for justice or to compete for publicity?

Georgetown *did* spend money on the rally, but it also shared in a $25,000 grant from the Knights of Columbus to cover certain costs of the rally. The administration *did* endorse participation—one week before the rally. Such endorsement *did* require courage and generosity and I want to applaud the administration here just as I *did* in my previous article. But what purpose would be served by exaggerating the role of Georgetown or other Catholic groups in the march? Has the stable, old rhetoric or piety and pretense with which we have comforted ourselves in the past ever helped us to be better Christians?

If I had used my article as a vehicle for congratulating churchmen while ignoring their racial sins and mine, I would have insulted the Negro's struggle for justice. Why should Christians be *congratulated* for starting to practice what they have so long preached? In participating in the racial struggle the white Christian does not make a *gift* of his aid to the Negro: he does that which it is necessary to do in order to go on regarding himself as a Christian.

Finally, I must take exception to Father Dunne's notion that university officials "authorized" participation in the march. Since when has any ecclesiastical authority taken upon itself the power to "authorize" participation by Catholic laymen in a social justice demonstration? We laymen marched as free men—on the authority of our consciences. Most of us, I believe, would have marched regardless of what attitude the administration took.

But I prefer to look upon Georgetown's participation in the march as a mutual endeavor. Each marcher, religious or lay, made his own free decision to march. The administration, as a corporate body, endorsed and facilitated our march, and some lower echelon administrators even attended the rally. For this cooperation the administration deserves recognition.

Now let's get on with the business of jobs and freedom.

FRANCIS E. KEARNS

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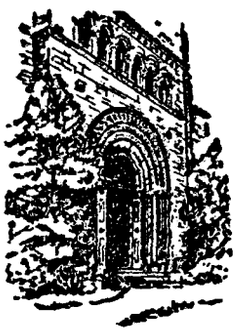

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and I run to him
on the wings
of birds.

His voice
is a rush of wind
stirring the leaves:

it has become a song
in me—
and a spring

striking
the new waters
of God.

MARTIN

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The American Layman: His Roots, His Trials, His Future

The Mind of the Catholic Layman. By Daniel Callahan. Scribner's. $3.95.

by John Tracy Ellis

WHEN William J. Onahan, Chicago lawyer and social reformer, was named chairman of the organizing committee for the first American Catholic lay congress held at Baltimore in November, 1889, among those from whom he sought advice was John Lancaster Spalding, Bishop of Peoria. In reply Spalding urged that the program be centered around two or three major topics and that the committee strive to reach practical conclusions, since he felt that too many Catholic gatherings began and ended in words.

"Take for instance lay cooperation," he said, "and devise some means by which laymen may really take part in Church work." And in pointing out what had been a characteristic of the general attitude toward the laity's relation to the Church, he added, "Let us cease to pretend to wish to do what we really have no intention of doing."

In the three-quarters of a century since Bishop Spalding wrote, more than once it seemed that the American Catholic laity were on the verge of a breakthrough by which they could "really take part in Church work," only to have the promise fade and yield little by way of practical results. Yet the problem did not die, for the current renewal of emphasis on the need for a more direct and meaningful lay participation in the Church's life is undoubtedly the strongest to date both in the United States and throughout the Catholic world. This movement that had as a background Pius XI's program for Catholic Action, grew and spread during the reigns of his two successors, and the recent decision of Pope Paul VI to provide for lay membership in the ecumenical council is evidence that in the present occupant of the Vatican it has a sympathetic supporter.

In a recent article on the collegiality of the bishops, Father Piet Fransen, S.J., stated, "If one wants to be a good theologian, he can never know Church history too well." Mr. Callahan would probably be the first to disclaim the title of theologian, but obviously he understands the close kinship of his central theme to theology, and his agreement with Father Fransen's dictum is demonstrated by the fact that he has devoted a little more than half of his absorbing book to the history of the Catholic layman in this country. And be it said, he has read his history very well, indeed. Not only is there clear evidence of a conscientious coverage of the most important literature on the subject, but what is far more difficult to achieve, there is an interpretation of that literature that will stand the test of time.

This book leaves little to be desired by way of a judicious balancing of evidence, of giving both sides on every controversial question, and of arriving at conclusions which, if they will not always gain the universal assent of readers, can in no instance be lightly dismissed as special pleading or biased reporting of the facts. In this respect Mr. Callahan will win a higher mark from historians of the Church than Xavier Rynne and Robert Kaiser in their books on Vatican Council II, although in fairness to those two worthwhile works, it must be kept in mind that Rynne and Kaiser deal almost entirely with contemporary history, while Callahan views the position of the Catholic layman from the vantage point of nearly 175 years of organized Catholicism in the United States, not to mention his treatment of the lay Catholics in the colonial period of American history.

True, the author of this book has gone astray now and then in details —what author has not? For example, the colonial Catholics were not ruled by the "Bishop of London" (an Anglican prelate) but by the Vicar Apostolic of the London District; Jean Dubois, third Bishop of New York, was never an archbishop; the best estimate we have for the total number of Catholic immigrants during the decade preceding the first immigration restriction law of the 1920's was closer to 1,250,000 than to 2,500,000; and the Bishops' Program of Social Reconstruction of February, 1919, of which no mention is made, was probably of more significance than the hierarchy's pastoral letter dated September 25 of the same year, of which Mr. Callahan speaks at some length.

Moreover, in one or two instances more may have been drawn by way of conclusion than the evidence would warrant, or a cause and effect relationship established where it is not clear that such existed. Thus the abuses of the lay trustee system of the early nineteenth century were, as the author says, probably at their worst in Philadelphia and New York (if one omits the smaller cities of Norfolk and Charleston); but would that account for the fact that these two eastern archdioceses, "have ever since been notably sluggish in encouraging or allowing lay activities or initiatives . . ."? And while the author's belief that the Americanist controversy at the end of the last century caused the promising lay movement of the 1880's to wither away, is certainly not lacking in plausibility, in all likelihood it would be more difficult to document it than is implied here.

For the most part, however, in the judgment of this reviewer Mr. Callahan has not only handled the purely historical matters with perception and common sense, but he has traversed the more difficult terrain of the contemporary problems of the Catholic laity with equal skill. In the former category, for example, the progressive character of the Catholicism of the Middle West has been correctly sensed, and the author has shown how much more advanced the Catholics of that region have been over their co-religionists in other parts of the country. For just as it was the vigorous leadership of midwestern bishops in the 1880's that

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brought about the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore and the Catholic University of America, it is that same region that has been in the vanguard of the most forward moves made in the liturgy and the new position of the laity in our day.

Nor has Mr. Callahan been less perceptive about the causes that have given rise of late to a certain anxiety over the relationships between the clergy and laity. In his analysis of the factors that have contributed to this condition he rightly places emphasis on the educational background and training of both groups. Speaking of the steps taken by the late nineteenth-century bishops to remedy the weaknesses of Catholic education, he puts his finger on what is unquestionably one of the most crucial points in the present situation when he says, "What they did not foresee clearly was that as the twentieth century advanced, the gap between the education of the clergy and that of the college-trained laity would widen."

Nothing is more important to the preservation of the close and cordial clerical-lay relations that have been one of the proud boasts of the American Church, than immediate steps to close that gap. For as a prominent English observer of American Catholicism, Canon William Barry, maintained over seventy years ago in an article written in appreciation of the contributions of Father Isaac Hecker, there is real danger to the Church when the clergy do not keep up with the laity in intellectual matters.

Barry said: "Laymen and men of the world will never be influenced for long by those who seem to them below their own level in acquirements and general culture. They will argue from things secular to things religious; and if they detect, as it appears to them, ignorance or narrow-mindedness in respect of matters outside the sanctuary, we may rest assured that they will turn a deaf ear to the preacher when he mounts the pulpit."

I cannot forbear to mention one or two more features of this splendid book. While fully crediting the varied progress made by the American Catholic community in recent years, Mr. Callahan makes it clear that much remains to be done. And in certain areas he has indicated how it must be done, as in higher education where, he says, it was one thing for Catholic colleges to decide to improve matters by instituting honors programs for the abler students; but he continues: "It was quite another to decide how free the Catholic ought to be to inquire into the teachings of the Church, how independent he ought to be as a citizen of the Church's social teachings, how much freedom he has to differ with his parish priest, his bishop or the pope."

In language that is always dignified and respectful the weaknesses in the position of the American Catholic laity are candidly laid bare, and that with the serenity of a man of faith whose love for the Church prompts him to speak out. In this respect one is reminded of the remark of Wilfrid Ward to the effect that "when one has no doubt that in fundamentals one is right and secure, one shrinks the less from complete candor." Obviously, Mr. Callahan feels "right and secure" in the fundamentals, and it is that spirit that gives inspiration to his candor. It will be a distinct disservice, therefore —as not infrequently happens in sensitive areas such as that of the present work—if critics rush into print without according Mr. Callahan the courtesy and fair treatment of first giving his book a careful reading. If they do that, it is difficult to see how the author's intellectual honesty and studied fairness can do other than mellow any asperity of judgment.

The present reviewer knows of no book that brings to this delicate theme a comparable knowledge, a sounder analysis of the basic issues, and a deeper reverence and concern for all that pertains to the welfare of the Catholic community of this country. Nor could he name a work that might better serve as a guide to both clergy and laity through the time ahead. It would be a wonderful boon to all concerned if every American Catholic bishop, priest, religious, layman, and laywoman could find the time to read Mr. Callahan's volume and to make its contents their own.

Twentieth-Century Parable

The Collector. By John Fowles. Little Brown. $4.95.

by Michele Murray

THE COLLECTOR is an uneasy combination of *The Tempest, Beauty and the Beast,* a textbook of criminal psychology and a guide to English class perversions for little folk. The whole makes for what can only be called genteel pseudo-pornography held in suspension by the sludge of Mr. Fowles's prose and the promise of revelations both profound and titillating. The promise remains promise and the disappointment that sets in after the first third of the book is so acute that one half forgets how fine that first section is.

It is the self-told story of one Frederick Clegg, a provincial English clerk, lower middle-class and with vast and pathetic pretensions to gentility. Brought up by his Aunt Annie to think that sex is dirty, he collects butterflies and dreams about girls in "artistic" poses to photograph, harbors resentment against those with "la-di-da voices" and congratulates himself on his "higher aspirations, as they say." A thoroughly odd duck, no doubt of it, and Mr. Fowles has him down beautifully.

Then Clegg wins a football pool for more than seventy thousand pounds (about two hundred thousand dollars) and finally allows his warped mind to focus on the figure of Miranda Grey, a young art student with long blonde hair whom he has been seeing from a distance for a number of years, growing more and more obsessed with the idea of possessing her according to his strange thinking, which is a combination of sentimentality and cold brutality that no longer seems fantastic after the history of National Socialism. Indeed, it is difficult to escape the conviction that Mr. Fowles had the psychology of Nazism much in mind as he created Clegg.

Overpowered and chloroformed, Miranda becomes his "guest," im-

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prisoned in a fitted-out cellar of the isolated house he has bought. At first he does very little but talk to Miranda and take some decorous photographs, splendidly pleased with himself for his generosity and quite unable to understand why this girl should not finally love him. Class, he blames it on, class differences and his inability to talk proper English. Or perhaps it is because he is so refined and spiritual, while underneath all her pose, Miranda is just like all other women, with their minds on only one thing.

Miranda refuses to believe that there is no way in which kindness or intelligence can reach, much less conquer, the armor of self-satisfied stupidity, but she continues to try to "educate" Clegg in the arts and social graces. And it is here that Mr. Fowles's book falls apart.

As if Miranda's dialogue, as reported by Clegg, were not revelatory enough, we are given her diary, which fills half the book. This is a serious mistake. The individuality of the victim of an act of irrational horror is less important than her *status* as victim—Miranda's fate would be just as terrible were she stupid and ugly, although the author does not seem to concede this. No, Mr. Fowles thinks his girl clever and fine, and opposes her life-enhancing vitality to Clegg's petty conformity, but the evidence of Miranda's diary shows her as little more than an echo of values which are as conventional in their way as are Clegg's pathetic scraps of ideas. "It makes me sick, the blindnes, deadness, out-of-dateness, stodginess and, yes, sheer jealous malice of the great bulk of England." I love honesty and freedom and giving . . . I love being to the full . . ." "We want something better than just money and keeping up with the Joneses." "The Rape of Intelligence. By the moneyed masses, the New People." And more of the same, replate with the air of self-congratulation for being on the "right side." Poor Miranda—her story is not a happy one, but she is hardly the exemplar of superior values that both she and her creator think she is. But Mr. Fowles's skill in tricking out commonplace perceptions in the garb of the new and original doubtless accounts for much of the book's surprising popularity.

It is not enough to make a book of substance out of a clever insight into the nature of Frederick Clegg. Nor is it enough to transform what could have been a neat little horror tale into a novel of depth and profundity. Even the horror tale fizzles out, not to pick up again until quite nearly the end of the book, by which time the resolute tepidity of the writing induces torpor in the reader. Finally, Frederick Clegg becomes worse than a madman—he becomes a relentless bore.

Early Camus

Notebooks 1935-42. By Albert Camus. Translated by Philip Thody. Knopf. $5.

by Alice Ellen Mayhew

THIS volume includes the three notebooks Camus kept during his twenties and which he never intended for publication. (There are two more volumes to follow.) There is very little in them about the author's private life, about those seven years during which he broke with Communism, was rejected by the Army, suffered attacks of tuberculosis, married his second wife and joined the Resistance. The notes, rather, are preoccupied with his writing and with the ideas which dominate his major works. For the reader who wants to trace Camus's intellectual or literary development, they are an invaluable addition to his published work.

The notebooks are filled with sketches and bits of dialogue that he was trying out, some directly out of his first, unpublished novel, *La Mort Heureuse (The Happy Death)*, the initial version of *The Stranger*. But they are, essentially, a writer's notes to himself: they are concerned with the discoveries and insights which were leading him to the *Myth of Sisyphus*. They are also a precocious youth's notes to himself: an ambitious program of reading and writing which he sets himself, instructions on attitudes in the form of cryptic imperatives, exercises in imagination and in ironies (he plays, for example, with the idea of the gambler on many levels: *joueur* is a word that gives up many conceits in French). Camus was already obsessed with the uses of time and the difficulty of achieving liberty; principally, with the absurdity of life which ends in a death which destroys life's meaning. This notion of absurdity dominated the first part of his work as the idea of a possible solution by revolt dominated the second half.

"What else did I do, after all, but elaborate on an idea that I found in the streets of my time?" he wrote in *L'Eté*. The idea of absurdity which invited nihilism had not originated with Camus, nor even with the existentialists. Nietzsche, with whom the young Camus was much taken, had declared God dead, and Ivan Karamozov, to whom Camus referred frequently in his essays, responded, "Everything is permitted." Camus adds in these notebooks that Ivan's answer is the only possible expression of "coherent" liberty. Yet Camus was to reject the nihilism that seemed almost inherent in his own premises: he found a justification for life, even if it was based on paradox, and he broke with the other mainstream of the existentialist left. These early notebooks offer plenty of evidence on how he accomplished this.

Camus was, first of all, obsessed by two seemingly contradictory notions: the *absurd*, which is the "opposite of irrationality . . . the plain and simple truth," the acknowledgement of death's reality and the rejection of illusions of hope; and also by *life*, which he loved mystically and which he intuitively felt had meaning and justification. But in order to seize life man must freely accept the absurd, and must refuse the mythic hopes handed down to him. Christianity, with its promises of another life, the existentialist "leap into faith," and even dialectic materialism, with its naive promises of an impossible utopia—all these tempt man to forfeit his awareness of death and absurdity and his acceptance of the tragic nature of existence, which is the true source of his greatness. This acceptance is the "lucidity" of which Camus speaks so often, "that,

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faced with the humblest or the most heart-rending experience, man should always be 'present'; and that he should endure this experience without flinching, with complete lucidity." This lucidity demands, in short, that man commit himself totally to life even in its *most* absurd ramifications, such as war. It is immoral to judge an event from the outside. "Ivory towers are down," he wrote in September, 1939. "Indulgence is forbidden."

But though Camus writes over and over that absurdity must be pursued to the end, the consequences for him are not the same as for Sartre. He snatched optimism literally out of the jaws of despair—"a paradoxical and arbitrary optimism . . . the hope born of despair," Claude Mauriac called it. It emerged from the second of Camus's prepossessions, his *rigid* acceptance of life as it is. It is not always easy to see how Camus reconciled his humanist's hope with his rationalist's despair but, "I am happy in this world for my kingdom is of this world," he wrote early on, and there is a scene from his unpublished novel that perfectly expresses the intensity of this consciousness and its sensate quality. A man lies in a hospital bed, horribly invalided. He affirms that he would never do anything to cut short a life he believes in so strongly; in fact, he would accept even worse, "blindness, deprivation of all my senses, loss of the power of speech and of any contact with the external world—as long as I could feel within me this dark, burning flame which is me and me alive. And I should still give thanks to life for having let me continue to burn with its flame."

Camus had, in fact, a taste for happiness and he was to spend his life fighting the life-denying. For the comforts of tradition he substituted liberty, but he equally rejected the solitary confinement of nihilism for the solidarity of men and the dignity of accepting life and death and dominating them both, a dignity which is, "in no way inferior to the greatness of the gods," which is, in fact, a priceless joy. This joyous reconciliation between life and the absurd, between life and death, forged so painfully by Camus, is so personally expressed in these notes that I cannot see how they can fail to move and enlighten the reader.

Philip Thody's notes, added to Roger Quillot's from the original edition, are excellent and, though there are peculiarities in translation, they do not alter any meanings. Moreover, Camus is rendered here, for a change, as the beautiful writer he was.

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1 Subscription, $8; addl., $6.50 each.

A Dark Reality

Prince Ishmael. By Marianne Hauser. Stein and Day. $5.95.

by George Greene

WAS HE the natural son of the Czar? Rightful heir to the throne of Baden? A messenger from God? Or what the police inspector devoutly maintained—a fraud? *Prince Ishmael* explores one of the murkiest mysteries of the nineteenth century. Barking and whimpering, Caspar Hauser appeared in the city of Nuremberg at Pentecost, 1828. Picked up by the police, taught how to speak, the youth claimed to have been kept underground, isolated since infancy. Feted, later abandoned by aristocrats, he met a violent fate that triggered even darker conjectures. Sociologists no longer expect miracles from the case histories of "wolf children," but it testifies to Hauser's appeal that he has inspired at least one earlier novel, in German, by Jakob Wassermann.

Dark Dominion and *The Choir Invisible* made clear Miss Hauser's ingenious, sometimes inhibiting, Freudian commitment. As a defensive gesture, at first the reader fortifies himself by fixing as many links as he can between her characters and the facts. Doubtless Georg Anders is based on Professor Daumer, while the Earl of Whatsworth owes much to Lord Stanhope, who adopted Caspar and was responsible for sending him to Ansbach, where the boy was murdered.

It is Caspar who warns us that fact can be as subject to distortion as symbol. "A few of my detractors went so far as to spread the rumor that I was never born." For all its borrowings, *Prince Ishmael* draws more on parable than dream. It is this dimension which gives this perplexing yet beautifully written book its reverberations. "The number of my fathers is truly prodigious." We share the trek of a mind for which the sun was "a terrible noise," for we all walk the same tightrope from expectancy to terror. When he first appeared Caspar carried a rosary and a pamphlet condemning the Pope. The wife of one friendly custodian is a deaf-mute. In Caspar's world the light is "mouse-gray."

The mayor is afraid of consequences. "An angel," he says peevishly, "could hardly lead to political complications." The kind yet dangerous Anders, whose library includes Plato, Swedenborg, Blake and Rousseau, feels his student is inspired. True, Casper learns by heart the names of the nine muses, yet he becomes paralyzed before the mayor's wife, whom he considers a lion. Caspar has inherited a knack for truth as well as the threat of insanity. He mistakes a wash on the

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line for a row of royal banners. He grows conscious of style, manners, money. Gradually he loses his innocence, when he "wanted everything to last forever." In his decline, he identifies Colossus as a discoverer and Carthage as another name for the common cold. Soon he feels guilt because of his body. Not long before he had asked: "Was love a man or a mouse?" Or: "Where was love's house?"

What justifies efforts to keep track of shifts from outer to inner experience is Miss Hauser's skill in showing an unconditioned mind as it confronts, struggles with, and ultimately succumbs to the limits of society. At first Caspar judges by odor. "Her mouth smelled like a wine cellar." In the beginning his candor, instinctive and reckless, rarely fails. He watches cats "rubbing up against the bloated moon." His vision is often macabre. "The broken veins were swimming in his face like little worms. . . ." He watches someone picking his nose "with an air of grief and abundance." He is frightened by sudden noises. Even the sound of a clock disturbs. "The chimes were like an old man coughing." Caspar assesses reality by frontal assault, without protecting himself, like a precocious child. Cavalry officers assume martial poses, so stiff they might have swallowed their own sabers. Yet vision and acquired facts prove inadequate. Caspar becomes the victim of his own progressively more ambitious campaign for acceptance and identity.

One rejoices that he has finally escaped from the cave of the statistics merchants. One values this version of his fate, hallucinatory yet moving. Consciously or not, Miss Hauser has leaped beyond the dust of those Bavarian police dossiers, as well as the hedging which occurs frequently with a narrative method such as hers. As it is, one grows anxious about the number of times Caspar throws the weight of judgment on *our* shoulders. ("What had I seen? What had I dreamed?") But the finale establishes itself with real force. The drunken minister urges the most revealing question. "Maybe I had lived in the dark, he said. Maybe the dark had lived in me."

The pompous mayor hoped Caspar might eventually produce some inspired work of art, preferably in the epic mode. But he will never write, Caspar realizes, except as a scribe in some law court. By now we know why we have been willing to follow through the thickets of Caspar's demanding reconstructions. He remains one of us, one of the restless millions who waste their lives in quests trailing from "Rotterdam to Notre-Dame to Potsdam."

Yet Caspar never descends to the insensitivity of another of his teachers, Herr Krock, for whom the sunrise "was the best show on earth to be had free of charge." And it is right that creative artists should seek out us foundlings. Caspar sensed that his visitors, even while gawking, heard "their own dark echo." Melville cites the name of Caspar Hauser early in that most haunted of all his fictions, *The Confidence-Man.*

In Verlaine's *Sagesse* Caspar speaks for all who feel themselves to have been born too soon or too late, those credulous, fated souls who give excuses—if not positive support—to outsiders who corrupt them. *"Suis-je né trop tôt ou trop tard? Qu'est-ce que je fais en ce monde? O vous tous, ma peine est profonde: Priez pour le pauvre Gaspard!"*

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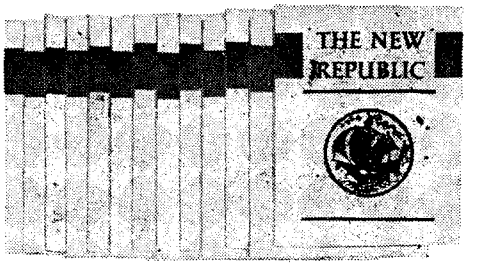

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